



pRide



SPRING 2000

THE NEWSLETTER BY AND FOR

RHODE ISLAND STATE EMPLOYEES

CHARTING YOUR OWN COURSE WITH DEFERRED COMPENSATION

Several legislative changes to the state's Deferred Compensation Plan that occurred last year, have made the plan more user friendly, and an attractive way to save and invest your earnings through the convenience of payroll deductions. Section 457 of the Internal Revenue Code permits public employees of state and local governments to participate in a Deferred Compensation Plan.

The concept is very simple. Employees may elect to participate and thereby defer a portion of their current compensation. Deferred contributions and their earnings, accumulate free of federal and state income taxation (pre-tax) until received by the employees, normally at retirement.

Benefits are payable to you upon separation from service, retirement or termination of employment for any reason. Benefits may also be payable in cases of financial hardship. These rules are established by IRS legislation. Deferred Compensation plans provide a tax-favored method for long term savings which are normally used to supplement pension benefits. The plan is not intended for savings and investments of a short-term nature since monies generally are not available unless you separate from service.

Specifics of the Rhode Island State Employee Plan

Employees have three plans to select from: Aetna, Fidelity and VALIC. Each plan has 20 investment products to offer. You may participate in one, two or all three plans. The minimum deferral is \$10.00 bi-weekly, and the maximum deferral is \$307.00 bi-weekly (\$8,000 per year) for all plans combined. You may start, stop or change deductions at any time during the year. Funds may also be transferred from one plan to another without penalty or fee.

Who Can Participate?

All benefit eligible employees, except employees of the three state colleges and the Department of Education. A tax-sheltered annuity plan (403-b) is available to them. Rules for that plan differ substantially from the Section 457 plan.

How Can I Enroll, Start, Stop or Change Deductions or Receive Further Information?

Call a plan directly: Aetna - 1-800-238-8458; Fidelity - 1-800-430-2363; VALIC - 401-521-8666.

Payroll deductions will begin or change on the next payday following your call.

Attend a **Benefit Fair** during April on the dates and locations listed in this newsletter, for an opportunity to meet directly with plan representatives, and to receive plan booklets and descriptions.

RI RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS GRANT

The Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training (DLT) has received a two-year \$267,500 grant from the Workers' Compensation Health Initiative, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) in Princeton, New Jersey.

Grant monies will be used to support the development of a model Technical Resource Center, that will obtain and provide information about medical care and the delivery of health services, for employees who suffer from a work injury or illness. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to health and health care.

The Workers' Compensation Health Initiative supports demonstration and evaluation projects, and test innovations in the delivery and financing of the medical care portion of workers' compensation. The Initiative's goal is to contain costs, and to improve the quality of care provided to injured workers. This six-year initiative was launched in October 1995, and has awarded \$6 million grants to date.

(Continued on page 6)

BENEFIT FAIRS DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN

Come to a Benefit Fair hosted by the Deferred Compensation Plans — Aetna, Fidelity and VALIC. Learn how to maximize your savings through pre-tax deductions and growth of your investments in the current market. Representatives will be available to review investment options (60 choices with all three plans), to enroll you, or to increase deductions. **You can now enroll in any plan, or in all three plans.**

April 17, 18, 21
(8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.)

Department of Administration
One Capitol Hill
Conference Room B —
2nd Floor
Providence, RI

April 25, 26
(8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.)

Department of MHRH
Arnold Conference Center
Cranston, RI

NOTE: Attendance is voluntary, and time cannot be charged as administrative leave unless approved in advance by your agency.



FROM THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

Executive Orders

No.	Date	Title
99-10	11-01-99	State Workforce Investment Board
99-11	11-04-99	Governor's Task Force on Elementary and Secondary Education Finance
00-1	2-08-00	Governor's Telecommunications Task Force
00-2	2-17-00	Creation of Growth Planning Council

For more information or copies of Executive Orders, call the Office of the Executive Counsel, 222-2080, Ext. 258.

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Deadline for contributions to the Summer issue is June 10, 2000.

The State of Rhode Island is an equal opportunity employer and reasonable accommodations will be provided. For assistance, call EEO Office at 222-3990. (TDD 222-6144).

OTD Training Courses Spring

April

		Fee
7 & 14	How to Search the World Wide Web	\$ 40
11	Intro to Windows 95	65
13	Intro to Microsoft Excel (Office 97)	110
18	Access Level II (Office 97)	65
21	Intermediate Microsoft Excel (Office 97)	110
25	Intro to Personal Computers	40

May

2 & 30	Intro to Access	65
8 & 10	Intro to Microsoft Word (Office 97)	110
11	Exploring the Challenges of a Supervisory Position	80
16	Intro to PowerPoint (Office 97)	65
23	Automation in Microsoft Word (Office 97)	65
30	Intro to Access (Office 97)	65

June

1	Intro to Microsoft Excel (Office 97)	110
2	Intermediate Microsoft Excel (Office 97)	110
6	Intro to Personal Computers	40
13	Access Level II (Office 97)	65
27	Intro to Access (Office 97)	65

For more information on these and other training courses, call the **Office of Training and Development at 222-2877**. For hearing impaired **TDD 222-6144**.

pRide in performance

DLT Employee Receives "Stars of the Industry" Award

10th annual event recognizes individuals for their dedication to the Hospitality Industry.

The RI Hospitality & Tourism Association and the Education Foundation held its 10th Annual Stars of the Industry Awards Dinner at the Convention Center in December. The event recognized individuals in the state who displayed dedication to the industry through education, legislative, hospitality, and tourism efforts in 1999.


Thomas Mannock, DLT employee who works in the RI School-To-Career (S-T-C) office, was awarded the 1999 S-T-C Partnership Leader Award for his outstanding work efforts with the Hospitality and Tourism industry in Rhode Island. Tom has been a member of the RI Hospitality and Tourism Association for the past five years.



Tom Mannock receives 1999 Partner in Industry Award from Kevin Cameron, General Manager of the Radisson Airport Hotel and Chairman of the RI Hospitality Education Foundation.

“This year’s Education Foundation award recipients have helped to bridge partnerships and provide education and leadership to the future professionals in our S-T-C programs,” said Kevin Cameron, Education Foundation Chairman and General Manager of the Radisson Airport Hotel. “It is important to recognize these individuals who volunteer their time assisting local high school students. They provide the needed exposure to our industry, so that students are qualified, well-educated individuals who have the correct training for careers in this field.”

— Submitted by Nancy Piffard



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The more you have saved at retirement, the better you'll be.
That's why it's important to have a retirement plan that offers:

- **More investment choices to meet your needs –**
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 - your choice of 19 mutual funds in the State's Deferred Compensation Plan provided by American General Retirement Services
- **Well-known advisers and subadvisers**
- **Retirement and investment planning tools**
- **Educational seminars and materials**
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**Contact your local Retirement Planning Specialist,
Sharon Remillard, at 401-521-8666**

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Need help with questions on planning your retirement?

Fidelity Investments® Representatives will be on site for **The State of Rhode Island Benefits Fairs**

Come learn how **Fidelity®** can help you
meet your retirement goals with:

- A Wide Range of Investment Options
- One-on-one Consultations
- Convenient Account Access
- Investment Education Information

Providence

April 17, 18, and 21
Department of Administration
One Capitol Hill
Conference Room B

Cranston

April 25 and 26
Department of MHRH
Arnold Conference Center
Conference Room B

Start planning for your future today!
Call Fidelity at 800-430-2363.

For more information about Fidelity mutual funds, including fees and expenses, call or write Fidelity for free prospectuses. Read them carefully before you make your investment choices.



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Aetna
Financial Services

STATE WORKERS ENJOY DAY OF GOLF AND RAISE MONEY FOR SECA

For the third consecutive year, state employees and their guests joined together at Richmond Country Club for the Howard Center's Annual Golf Tournament hosted to benefit the State Employees Charitable Appeal (SECA) campaign.

Organized by **Denise Breckel**, coordinator of community facilities construction for the Department of Human Services, and **Tony Vanditti**, an electrician with the Department of MHRH, the tournament held October 1, 1999, raised \$1,000 for SECA.

More than 160 golfers participated in this year's tournament, and enjoyed 18-holes of golf played in a four-player scramble format with a shotgun start. Complimentary beverages and hot dogs were provided for the golfers throughout the day. Therapeutic Massage was also on hand all day offering golfers free massages. A dinner of prime rib or baked stuffed chicken followed the round of golf.

Prizes were awarded for the first, second and third place teams, the four golfers (two male and two female) who completed the longest drive, and the two golfers who were able to get closest to the pin. First place winners in the "best score" category were the MHRH foursome of **Tom Mooney**, **Jim Tortolano**, **Anthony Casali**, and **Jim Manchester**. Members of this winning foursome were given the opportunity to choose from an array of prizes for their accomplishment.



Best score category winning foursome from MHRH l to r, Tom Mooney, Jim Tortolano, Anthony Casali and Jim Manchester.

Sponsors of the tournament included **AA Wrecking & Asbestos Abatement**; **Advantage Glass Co**; **Apollo Roofing & Sheet Metal, Inc.**; **A-Team Petroleum, Inc.**; **Athenian Deli**; **Castelluci, Galli Corp.**; **Crest Manufacturing Co.**; **Delizioso**; **Dunkin' Donuts**; **EastSide Foodmart**; **EDS-State Government Services**; **IDK Promotional**; **JMJ Construction**; **Kevin J. Barry Heating & A/C**; **Metro Towing**; **Michelangelo's Deli Express**; **Motiva Enterprises LLC**; **NAGE 79**; **On the Rocks**; **Prospect Development Corp.**; **Providence Watch Hospital**; **RYKO Manufacturing**; **Shalvey Bros. Landscape, Inc.**; **Standard Motor Products**; **Thomas F. Ginnerty, Esq.** and **XRI**.

Donations to the tournament were made by the following companies: **Abbot Anesthesia**; **AC Delco**; **Andrea's Restaurant**; **Arizona**; **Auto Show**; **Coca-Cola of Providence**; **Culinary Affair**; **Deka Battery**; **Exotic Tans**; **Goodyear Pawtucket**; **McLaughlin & Moran**; **Nantucket Nector**; **Northeast Golf Sales**; **Richmond Country Club**; **Tenneco**; **Tire Pro**, and **Trends Clothing Store**.

Special thanks to **Danielle Balzano**, **Mary Balzano**, **Tom Breckel**, **Debbie Brotherton**, **Steve Cross**, **David Drew**, **Vicki Finn**, **Laura Hood**, **Erica Koch**, **Shirley Mancini**, **Gerry Mirabile**, **Angela Ruo** and **Angelo Ruo** for their help in coordinating the event.

This year's tournament has already been scheduled, and will take place Friday, September 29, 2000. If you are interested in participating in this event, please contact **Denise Breckel** at **462-2379**.

— Submitted by Tracey Manni

EYE TO EYE WITH YOUR COMPUTER



The desktop computer: It's revolutionized the workplace, but in its wake have come new challenges to the eyes and vision system.

Health experts now point to "computer vision syndrome" as a major workplace concern. Millions of people in the United

States may suffer from this condition, and the number of cases is on the rise, say Jeffrey Anshel, O.D., a Carlsbad, California, Vision Service Plan optometrist who specializes in treating the disorder.

Computer vision syndrome, or CVS, is a catchall term for computer-related eye fatigue, blurred visions, headaches and back or neck aches.

"The human eye wasn't really designed to stare into a cathode ray tube for eight hours at a stretch," says Dr. Anshel, who advises employers on ways to combat CVS. "In many cases, the quality of the image on the screen is poor, which can cause enormous strain on the eyes, although it doesn't damage them.

"Many optometrists feel that people who work with computers should get their eyes checked regularly," says Dr. Anshel.

Computer users can fend off CVS by taking short breaks and briefly refocusing their eyes.

"I've come up with a strategy I call '**the Three Bs**,'" says Dr. Anshel. "If you're working in front of a computer screen all day long, you need to remember to **blink, breathe and break**.

"In other words, you should take frequent breaks, during which you blink your eyes repeatedly and take several deep, relaxing breaths while stretching you body."

"It also helps to follow my '**20-20-20 Rule**' during these breaks," he says. "**Every 20 minutes or so, take a 20-second break** in which you look carefully at objects that are at least **20 feet away**". "If you follow the Three Bs and the 20-20-20 Rule, you'll reduce your chances of computer-related vision problems," says Dr. Anshel.

Source: *Eye on Health*
Newsletter from Vision Service Plan

DLT GRANT (continued from page 1)

"We are delighted to be chosen as the state to break new ground," said Governor Lincoln Almond. "Collaboration with the Rhode Island Workers' Compensation Advisory Council, composed of representatives from major stakeholders in the workers' compensation system, will be an important factor in the success of the Center."

E. Jean Severance, Associate Director, Division of Injured Workers' Services at DLT, supported Almond's comment adding, "This is a natural progression for workers' compensation in Rhode Island. Through the dedication of many individuals, tremendous gains have been made in driving costs down while maintaining integrity within the system. Now we need to be certain that comparable attention is placed on ensuring that all injured workers in Rhode Island are able to obtain the best possible medical care."

Under the direction of Kathleen Sohar, R.N., Director of Patient Care Services at the Department's John E. Donely Rehabilitation Center, this new initiative will ensure that policy development and maintenance continues to build bridges between Rhode Island's policy makers and those impacted by the workers' compensation system.

— Submitted by Nancy Piffard